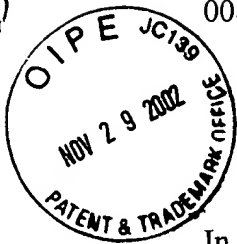


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PATENT APPLICATION



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:)

ATSUSHI MATSUMOTO ET AL.)

Application No.: 09/434,404)

Filed: November 5, 1999)

For: IMAGE PROCESSING METHOD,
SYSTEM AND APPARATUS, AND
STORAGE MEDIUM)

Examiner: M. Nguyen

Group Art Unit: 2622

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Technology Center 2600

November 27, 2002

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT
AND
PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME

Sir:

Applicants hereby petition to extend the time for response to the Office Action dated September 25, 2002, to December 25, 2002. A check in the amount of \$400.00 is submitted herewith in payment of the extension fee. Please charge any deficiency in this fee, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account 06-1205.

In response to that Office Action, Applicants elect, with traverse, to proceed initially with prosecution of Group I (Claims 1-17), drawn to an image processing apparatus and method for switching the contents of processing in a conversion means on

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the basis of the attribute information hold by a hold means, classified in class 358, subclass 448.

In traversal of the restriction requirement, however, Applicants note that Group II is directed drawn to arrangements for generating the attribute information (attribute map information) utilized in Claims 1-17. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the inventions of Groups I and I are sufficiently closely related to justify that they be examined together, and that such examination will not significantly burden the Office, but will in the long run actually reduce the overall burden on the Examiner.

An early and favorable examination of all of Claims 1-24 on the merits is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


Attorney for Applicants

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